Case 2:21-cv-01424 Page 1 of 12

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

| I. (a) PLAINTIFFS | | | | DEFENDANTS | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|-----------------|--|--------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| | | | | The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia | | | | | | |
| Maria Ruffin | | | | The official of toophan of this separate | | | | | | |
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| (b) County of Residence of | First Listed Plaintiff Plant | hiladelphia | | County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) | | | | | | |
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| (c) Attorneys (Firm Name, A | ddress and Telephone Number | -) | | Attorneys (If Know | vn) | | | | | |
| Marc A Weinher | g, Saffren & Weinbe | era 815 Greewoo | od | | | | | | | |
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Case 2:21-cv-01424 UNITIED STATES DISTRICE COURT/25/21 Page 2 of 12

DESIGNATION FORMthe category of the case for the purpose of assignment to the appropriate calendar)

| (to be used by counsel or pro se plaintiff to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of assignment to the appropriate category | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Address of Plaintiff: 6123 W. TEFF. ERSON STREET, PHILADELPHIA PA 19151 | | | | | | | | |
| Address of Defendant: 3401 CIVIC CENTER BLUD., PHILADELPHIA PA 19104 | | | | | | | | |
| Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction: CHOP - 3401 CIVIC CENTER BLVD. PHILADELPHIA | | | | | | | | |
| PA, 19104 | | | | | | | | |
| RELATED CASE, IF ANY: | | | | | | | | |
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| Civil cases are deemed related when Yes is answered to any of the following questions: | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one year Yes No No | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior suit Yes No No | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already in suit or any earlier numbered case pending or within one year previously terminated action of this court? | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Is this case a second or successive habeas corpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil rights Yes No No | | | | | | | | |
| I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case is / is not related to any case now pending or within one year previously terminated action in | | | | | | | | |
| this court except as noted above. | | | | | | | | |
| DATE: 5 CS C Must sign here UUU 4.) Autorney-at-Law / Pro Se Plaintiff Attorney I.D. # (if applicable) | | | | | | | | |
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IN THE UNTIED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

MARIA RUFFIN

6123 W. Jefferson Street

Philadelphia, PA 19151

Plaintiff,

_ _ _

Civil Action

Jury Trial Demanded

THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF

PHILADELPHIA

V.

3401 Civic Center Boulevard

14th Floor

Philadelphia, PA 19104

Defendant.

COMPLAINT

I. PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

Plaintiff, Maria Ruffin brings this action under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended 42 U.S.C. § 2000-1 e-1 et seq ("Title VII") for Race and Retaliation, The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, 43 P.S. §954, et seq, and pursuant to applicable Pennsylvania common law. Plaintiff seeks equitable relief, compensatory and punitive damages, costs and attorney's fees from Defendant for Defendant's discriminatory practices, retaliation, and other tortious actions.

II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 2. Jurisdiction over this action is conferred on this Court by 28 U.S.C. §1331, 1343 and 42 U.S.C. §2000 e-5(f).
- 3. Plaintiff has complied with all jurisdictional prerequisites including those set forth in 42 U.S.C. §2000 e-5 and was issued a Notice of Right to Sue by the Equal Employment

Opportunity Commission (Attached hereto as Exhibit "A").

- 4. Venue is proper in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1391 and 42 U.S.C. § 2000 e-5.
- 5. At all times material hereto, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Defendant") was "engaged in an industry affecting commerce" within the meanings of §701(a) and 701(b) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §2000e.
 - 6. At all times material hereto, Defendant employed more than 100 employees.
- 7. At all times material hereto, Defendant was an "employer" as defined by §701(b) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §2000 e.
- 8. At all times material hereto, Defendant was an "employer" as defined by §4 of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, 43 P.S. §954.
- 9. At all times material hereto, Defendant was an "employer" of Plaintiff as defined by §5 of Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, 43 P.S. §955.
- 10. At all times material hereto, the Defendants' discrimination occurred within the district of this Court and in the City and County of Philadelphia.

III. THE PARTIES

- 11. Plaintiff, Maria Ruffin (hereinafter "Plaintiff"), is an adult female of who is African American.
- 12. Upon information and belief, Defendant operates a medical facility/hospital, located at 3401 Civic Center Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19104.
- 13. At all times material hereto, the discrimination enumerated within this Complaint occurred within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at Defendant's location in Pennsylvania.

IV. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

- 14. Plaintiff was hired by the Defendant as a psychiatric technician in or about July, 2017.
- 15. While working for CHOP, Plaintiff would often work one-on-one with children in the hospital, with a varying shift schedule, including overnight shifts.
- 16. During her employment, Plaintiff was accused, by another nurse of sleeping in a patient's room.
 - 17. Plaintiff was not sleeping in the patient's room.
- 18. Defendant's employees forced Plaintiff to undergo a drug test, despite no allegation that Plaintiff was under the influence of any illegal substance.
- 19. Ultimately, the drug test was clear. However, Plaintiff was escorted out of the building following that drug test.
- 20. On or about November 16, 2019, an incident occurred during Plaintiff's shift, where a Caucasian supervisor (who was not Plaintiff's direct supervisor) alleged, she was injured as a result of Plaintiff's actions.
 - 21. Allegedly, the Caucasian supervisor suffered a concussion.
- 22. Though Plaintiff was in the room when the Caucasian supervisor was injured, she did not cause the injury.
- 23. On that date, following the incident, Plaintiff heard the Caucasian supervisor say the "n"-word.
- 24. Plaintiff was improperly and pretextually terminated for this purported incident related injury on November 20, 2019.

- 25. Additionally, though at the time of her termination Defendant alleged Plaintiff was subject to a Performance Improvement Plan ("PIP"), Plaintiff never read, received, or signed any PIP Plan, nor were any PIP meetings held.
- 26. Additionally, during the course of her employment, Plaintiff observed that African-American employees were often given the more aggressive children to deal with.
- 27. The aforementioned conduct of Defendant and its employees was materially adverse and would dissuade a reasonable worker from exercising and/or attempting to exercise their rights and benefits under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000, et seq. and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, 33 P.S. §951, et seq.
- 28. Defendant had a continued need for the work that Plaintiff had been performing.
- 29. Notwithstanding, Plaintiff's complaints to Defendant's employees, the harassing conduct continued throughout the course of her employment with Defendants.
- 30. At no time did Defendants, or any of the principles, supervisors, managers, officers, directors, or agents of Defendants, institute an effective grievance procedure designed to eliminate racial discrimination of employees and no reasonable steps were taken to prevent the same in the workplace; and if said policy existed; Defendant failed to follow any requirements of said policy.
- 31. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's aforesaid acts and omissions, the hostile work environment which was created thereby, and Defendant's discriminatory practices, Plaintiff:
 - (a) was discharged from her employment to her great financial detriment

- (b) was caused pain and suffering, physical injury and a loss of enjoyment of life; and
- (c) suffered severe emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation and depression.

COUNT I

MARIA RUFFIN V. THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA VIOLATION OF TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000

- 32. Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all of the aforementioned allegations set forth above.
- 33. The conduct of Defendant, and its employees' treatment of Plaintiff during the course and scope of her employment violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000, et seq as the harassment, hostile work environment, retaliation and discrimination was based upon Plaintiff's Race.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, Maria Ruffin, demands judgment against Defendant, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, including:

- (a) A declaration that Defendant's actions as described herein violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- (b) equitable and declaratory relief requiring Defendant, to institute sensitivity and other training for all managers, employees and supervisors to prevent racial harassment and discrimination and retaliation in the workplace;
- (c) equitable and declaratory relief requiring Defendant, to institute and enforce a specific policy and procedure for investigating and preventing complaints relating to racial harassment and discrimination and retaliation;

- (d) equitable and declaratory relief requiring the posting of notices on the premises so that employees will know and understand their rights and remedies, including official company policy;
- (e) compensatory damages for Plaintiff's loss of past and present future income and benefits, pain and suffering inconvenience, embarrassment, emotional distress and loss of enjoyment of life;
 - (f) punitive damages;
- (g) payment of interest and Plaintiff's attorney's fees and costs associated with bring the claim; and
 - (h) such other relief as this Court may deem appropriate under the circumstances.

COUNT II MARIA RUFFIN V. THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA VIOLATION OF PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS ACT 33 PS 955, ET SEQ.

- 34. All aforementioned paragraphs are incorporated by reference as if fully set forth at length herein.
- 35. The conduct of Defendant's treatment of Plaintiff in her employment violated the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act 33 P.S. 955, *et seq*, as Plaintiff's harassment, hostile work environment, retaliation and discrimination was based upon her Race.
- 36. Defendant's employment practices deprived Plaintiff of equal employment opportunities and otherwise affected her status as an employee because of her race.
- 37. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's actions, conduct and omissions, Plaintiff has suffered the injuries and damages set forth herein past and future earnings, income,

benefits, and opportunities as well as pain and suffering, severe emotional distress, mental anguish, embarrassment and a loss of enjoyment of life's pleasure.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, Maria Ruffin demands judgment against Defendant, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, including:

- (a) a declaration that Defendant's actions as described herein violated The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act;
- (b) equitable and declaratory relief requiring Defendant to institute sensitivity and other training for all managers, employees and supervisors to prevent harassment and discrimination in the workplace;
- (c) equitable and declaratory relief requiring Defendant to institute and enforce a specific policy and procedure for investigating and preventing complaints;
- (d) equitable and declaratory relief requiring the posing of notices on the premises so that employees will know and understand their rights and remedies, including the official company policy;
- (e) compensatory damages for Plaintiff's loss of past and future income and benefits, pain and suffering, inconveniences, embarrassment, emotional distress and loss of enjoyment of life, plus interest;
- (f) payment of interest and Plaintiff's attorney's fees and costs associated with bringing this claim; and

(g) such other relief as this Court my deem appropriate under the circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,

SAFFREN & WEINBERG

MARC A. WEINBERG, ESQUIRE

Pa./Atty. I.D. 60643

815 Greenwood Avenue, Suite 22

Jenkintown, PA 19046

(215) 576-0100

mweinberg@saffwein.com

Dated: 3/25/21

EXHIBIT A

EEOC Form 181 (11/2020)

U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

| DISMISSAL AND NOTICE OF RIGHTS | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-----------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| To: Maria Ruffin 6123 W. Jefferson Street Philadelphia, PA 19151 | | | Philadelphia District Office 801 Market Street Suite 1000 Philadelphia, PA 19107 | | | | | |
| | On behalf of person(s) aggrieved whose identity is CONFIDENTIAL (29 CFR §1601.7(e)) | | | | | | | |
| EEOC Charge | No. EEOC Representative | | Telephone No. | | | | | |
| | Legal Unit, | | (007) 500 0707 | | | | | |
| 530-2020-0 | | | (267) 589-9707 | | | | | |
| THE EEOC IS CLOSING ITS FILE ON THIS CHARGE FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON: | | | | | | | | |
| | The facts alleged in the charge fail to state a claim under ar | ny of the | statutes enforced by the EEOC. | | | | | |
| Your allegations did not involve a disability as defined by the Americans With Disabilities Act. | | | | | | | | |
| | The Respondent employs less than the required number of employees or is not otherwise covered by the statutes. | | | | | | | |
| | Your charge was not timely filed with EEOC; in other words, you waited too long after the date(s) of the alleged discrimination to file your charge | | | | | | | |
| X | The EEOC issues the following determination: The EEOC will not proceed further with its investigation, and makes no determination about whether further investigation would establish violations of the statute. This does not mean the claims have no merit. This determination does not certify that the respondent is in compliance with the statutes. The EEOC makes no finding as to the merits of any other issues that might be construed as having been raised by this charge. | | | | | | | |
| | The EEOC has adopted the findings of the state or local fair employment practices agency that investigated this charge. | | | | | | | |
| | Other (briefly state) | | | | | | | |
| - NOTICE OF SUIT RIGHTS - (See the additional information attached to this form.) | | | | | | | | |
| Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, or the Age Discrimination in Employment Act: This will be the only notice of dismissal and of your right to sue that we will send you. You may file a lawsuit against the respondent(s) under federal law based on this charge in federal or state court. Your lawsuit must be filed WITHIN 90 DAYS of your receipt of this notice; or your right to sue based on this charge will be lost. (The time limit for filing suit based on a claim under state law may be different.) | | | | | | | | |
| Equal Pay Act (EPA): EPA suits must be filed in federal or state court within 2 years (3 years for willful violations) of the alleged EPA underpayment. This means that backpay due for any violations that occurred more than 2 years (3 years) before you file suit may not be collectible. | | | | | | | | |
| On behalf of the Commission | | | | | | | | |
| | Cami R/s S/s | hear - | December 31, 2020 | | | | | |

Jamie R. Williamson, District Director

CC:

Enclosures(s)

Abigail L. Flitter, Esq.
Associate General Counsel
THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA
Office of General Counsel/Legal Dept.
2716 South Street, 3rd Fl.
Philadelphia, PA 19146

Marc A. Weinberg, Esq. SAFFREN & WEINBERG 815 Greenwood Avenue, Suite 22 Jenkintown, PA 19046 (Date Issued)